

REMARKS

This is in full and timely response to the final Official Action of June 25, 2008. Reexamination in light of the following remarks is respectfully requested. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1-3 and 6-9 are currently pending in this application, with claims 1 and 2 being independent.

I. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hattori et al. (US 20030088576) in view of Numata et al. (US 20030041304). The rejection is respectfully traversed for reasons set forth below.

As a preliminary matter, claims 3 and 4 have been canceled and were not pending on the mailing date of the Office Action.

1. Claim 1

Claim 1 is directed to a file management device for managing, with an index file recorded in a recording medium, a file recorded in the recording medium, wherein the index file includes a series of entries comprising, in block, information extracted from a file recorded in the recording medium, information about a file correlated to a folder set in the recording medium, and information about the folder, and layer information which indicates layer structures of the file and the folder by pointing to other entries; wherein the entry for the information about the folder includes registration information which indicates files belonging to the folder by pointing to other entries, and identifying information that indicates whether or not the folder is a virtual folder; wherein the file management device retrieves the entries of the index file according to conditions for retrieval set by a user to select a file registered in the index file, and registers, as an entry for the virtual folder, a retrieval result as to the selected file in the index file, along with the conditions for

retrieval; and wherein, when the entry for the retrieval result is registered, information indicating that the entry is for the retrieval result is set in the index file, wherein the layer information is set so as to indicate that the virtual folder for the retrieval result is under a virtual retrieval result collection folder in which retrieval results are collected, and the registration information is set to point to entries of the selected file.

According to the Applicants' claimed invention, a virtual folder and a retrieval result are related to each other as recited in claim 1. That is, "the file management device ... registers, as an entry for the virtual folder, a retrieval result as to the selected file in the index file, along with the conditions for retrieval." Therefore, a search processing can be executed so as to further refine the result of a search executed in the past by using the entry of the virtual folder, so that it is possible to effectively use the search result in the past.

On the other hand, Hattori et al. arguably teaches an object-oriented data storage and retrieval system using index table, and Numata et al. arguably teaches a structured document management system and structured document management method, in which a document is decomposed into structured partial elements, and the structured partial elements are linked by dummy elements.

However, even if Hattori et al. discloses a retrieval system using index table, and that Numata et al. discloses dummy elements, the applied art fails to teach that a retrieval result is related to a virtual folder. Therefore, they fail to disclose, teach or suggest that "the file management device ... registers, as an entry for the virtual folder, a retrieval result as to the selected file in the index file, along with the conditions for retrieval."

Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of the claim is respectfully requested.

If allowance of the claim is not forthcoming, Applicants request to show what elements and functions thereof disclosed in the applied art. correspond to the limitation of claim 1, that is,

“the file management device ... registers, as an entry for the virtual folder, a retrieval result as to the selected file in the index file, along with the conditions for retrieval”.

2. Claim 2

Claim 2 is directed to a file managing method of managing a file recorded in a recording medium with an index file recorded in the recording medium, wherein the index file includes a series of entries comprising, in block, information extracted from a file recorded in the recording medium, information about a file correlated to a folder set in the recording medium, and information about the folder, and layer information which indicates layer structures of the file and the folder by pointing to other entries; and wherein the entry for the information about the folder includes registration information that indicates files belonging to the folder by pointing to other entries, and identifying information which indicates whether or not the folder is a virtual folder; said method comprising: a step of retrieving the entries of the index file according to retrieval conditions set by a user to select a file registered in the index file; a step of registering, as an entry for the virtual folder, a retrieval result about the selected file in the index file, along with the conditions for retrieval; a step of setting information indicating that the entry is for the retrieval result in the index file, and a step of setting the layer information so as to indicate that the virtual folder for the retrieval result is under a virtual retrieval result collection folder in which retrieval results are collected; and a step of setting the registration information to point to entries of the selected file.

Similarly to claim 1, the applied art fails to disclose, teach or suggest that “a step of registering, as an entry for the virtual folder, a retrieval result about the selected file in the index file, along with the conditions for retrieval.”

Thus, it would have not been obvious to one of the ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicants' invention to incorporate the teaching of Numata et al. into Hattori of object oriented data storage and retrieval system using index table.

3. Claims 3

Applicants respectfully submit that since claim 3 depends on claim 2, it is allowable for at least the reasons that claim 2 is allowable and it is further allowable by reason of the additional limitations set forth therein. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claim 3 is respectfully requested.

4. Claims 6-9

Applicants respectfully submit that since claims 6-9 depend on claim 1, they are allowable for at least the reasons that claim 1 is allowable and they are further allowable by reason of the additional limitations set forth therein. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claim 6-9 is respectfully requested.

II. Conclusion

In view of the following arguments, all claims are believed to be in condition for allowance over the prior art of record. Therefore, this response is believed to be a complete response to the Office Action.

However, Applicants reserve the right to set forth further arguments supporting the patentability of their claims, including the separate patentability of the dependent claims not explicitly addressed herein, in future papers.

Further, for any instances in which the Examiner took Official Notice in the Office Action, Applicants expressly do not acquiesce to the taking of Official Notice, and respectfully request that the Examiner provide an affidavit to support the Official Notice taken in the next Office Action, as required by 37 CFR 1.104(d)(2) and MPEP § 2144.03.

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Docket No.: SON-3119

Applicants believe no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 18-0013, under Order No. SON-3119 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

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Respectfully submitted,

By  1/9/200

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